

## Bringing Theory to Practice Request for Proposals 2017 - 2018

The Bringing Theory to Practice Project requests proposals for the following:

### **Campus Dialogue Grants: Realizing Higher Education's Greater Purposes**

***Deadline for proposal submission: Friday, December 9, 2016***

***Informational Webinar: Tuesday, October 25, 2016***

Campus dialogue grants of up to \$5,000 for a single institution, or up to \$15,000 for consortia, (institutional matching required for both) will provide support for one-year projects (calendar year 2017 - 2018) based around thematically integrated gatherings or “dialogues” involving a core group of diverse campus constituents. Successful proposals should demonstrate how these dialogues will, through the lens of your unique campus culture and the issues that impact it, facilitate the greater purposes of higher education: learning and discovery, well-being, civic engagement, and preparation for living meaningfully in the world.

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*Bringing Theory to Practice is an independent national initiative operating in partnership with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and supported by the S. Engelhard Center with funding from The Charles Engelhard Foundation, The Endeavor Foundation, The Spencer Foundation, and other foundations and individuals.*

## BTtoP's Theory of Campus Change

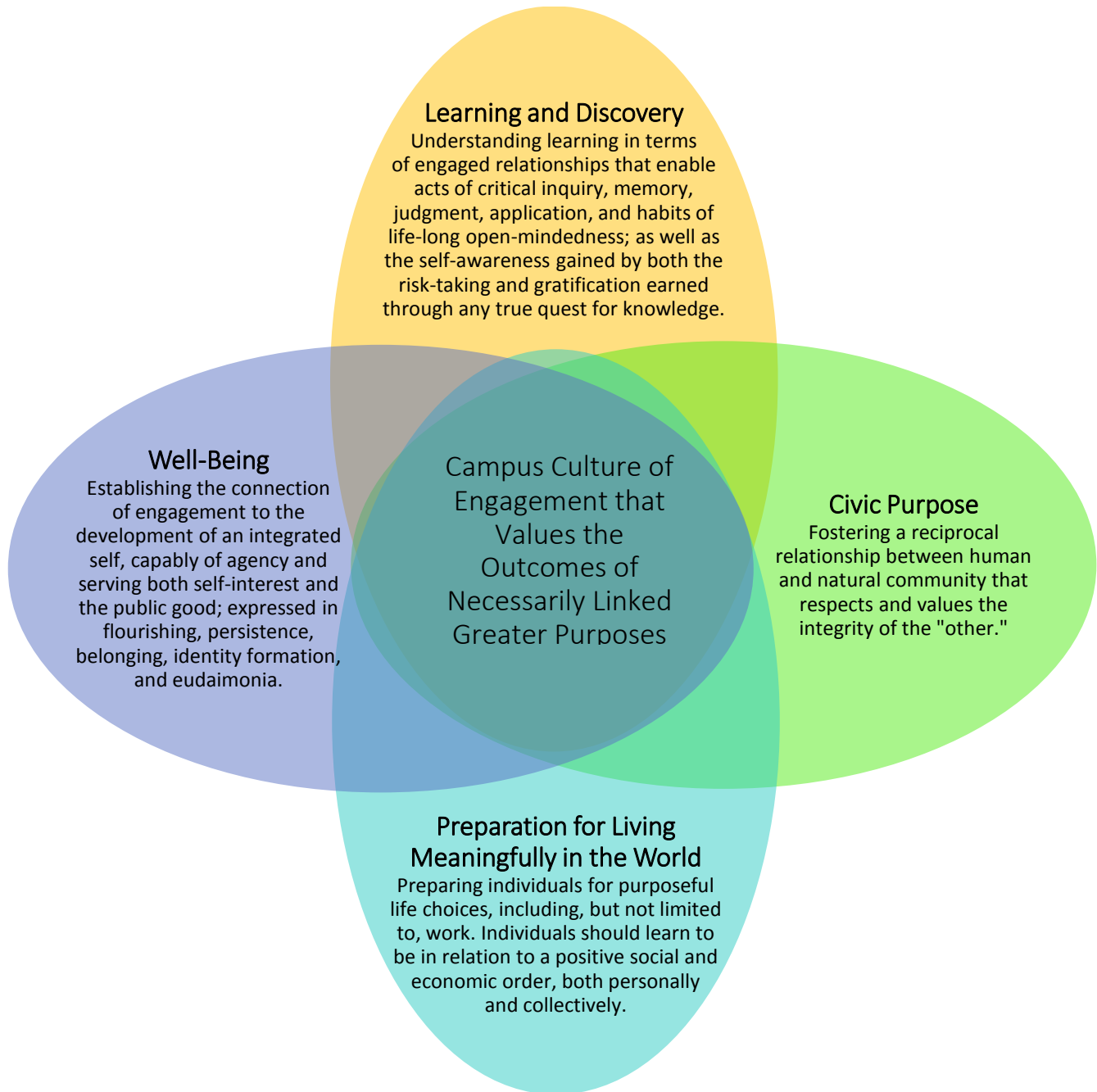
BTtoP asserts that changing conversations—at a communal table, a board table, or a seminar table—leads to changing expectations. When expectations are changed, processes and practices reflecting those new expectations promote change on campuses.

A predominant narrative currently surrounding higher education focuses on job attainment, salaries, and the use of education to promote oneself in the work place. Though useful, such a utilitarian approach to higher education has also obscured the ability of campuses to construct narratives that embrace the *greater purposes of higher education*—the idea that a college education can help students to become deeply engaged in learning, to find their place in society, to flourish as individuals, and to lead lives of meaning and purpose.

Intentional, facilitated conversations about higher education's greater purposes can put into fresh perspective how a college or university can articulate the multiple and pervasive opportunities for helping students to reach their full potential as individuals in a complex, global world. The benefit of attending to these greater purposes can help frame why diversity and access are more than desirable goals for campus engagement, but are also understood as essential elements of an institution's commitment to learning, civic development, personal development, and well-being. When these conversations are engaged by the campus community, and inclusive of constituents typically on the margins of such discussions, fuller strategies for advancing the greater purposes of institutional mission, and of higher education, can be realized.

BTtoP seeks to support such inclusive and focused conversations through campus dialogue grants. Our hope is that these dialogues will seed a change in the narrative around higher education from one that views a college education primarily as a pathway to a *better job* to one that views higher education as a pathway to a *better life*. The collective expression of this narrative by many campuses, across many voices and perspectives, will guide a new understanding of the greater purposes of higher education.

# The Greater Purposes of Higher Education



## An Invitation from BTtoP Director Don Harward

Colleagues,

We thank you in advance for considering how the following RFP for campus dialogues around realizing higher education's greater purposes may be used to advance your own ideas for institutional and student success.

Each campus dialogue grant is intended to support a series of focused conversations among a core group of multiple campus constituencies. Each conversation should be designed with unique goals in mind that collectively help to propel change. These goals include exploration of your institutional mission in association with the greater purposes of higher education—learning, well-being, civic development, and preparation for a meaningful life; the development of a plan for realizing these purposes through specific campus actions and priorities; and, finally, the expectations for sharing proposed activities and disseminating findings with colleagues, to both internal and external audiences.

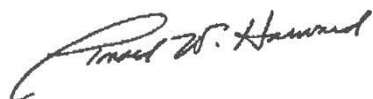
The diagram above is provided to provoke consideration of how you might construct your own campus dialogue. You will have your own perspective regarding the meaning of those aims and their connection to your own culture, campus history, and the current issues that affect it. The window through which you choose to enter these conversations will vary.

For example, you may consider how external political decisions and policy changes at the local, state, or federal level have shaped internal planning, including curricular designs; you may consider the changing expectations of faculty; the challenges of access and tuition costs for students; or the importance of “belonging” in the campus community, particularly, among students traditionally underserved within higher education. You may consider how social issues and social media relate to the civic engagement and the well-being of students; or how to authentically couple student affairs and academic affairs. Though your window to such dialogues will be unique, the idea that campuses have long been the epicenter for conversations resulting in change is utterly foundational. The plans you launch as a result of these discussions can guide campuses across the country as they engage their own unique conversations.

In supporting campus dialogues, we are championing a basic strategy of helping to affect the conversations about purpose that take place within and beyond our institutions. Changing those conversations, deepening them, making them inclusive, can alter expectations of what colleges and universities consider to be “business as usual.” The collective will be to re-imagine the priorities and practices necessary for taking action and for affirming the true and greater purposes of higher education for the better of all those involved.

We invite your creative responses and proposals.

With much respect,



## Grant Details

### Amount

*Grant Amount:* Up to \$5,000 for single campuses, or up to \$15,000 for consortia\*

*Matching Support Required:* Grants must be matched by institutional resources, and may include [in-kind](#) matches.

### Important Dates

*Proposal Submission Deadline:* Friday, December 9, 2016

*Informational Webinar:* Tuesday, October 25, 2016, 2:30pm EST

*Awards Announced:* Friday, January 20, 2017

*Project Completion Deadline:* Wednesday, January 31, 2018

*Final Budget Report Deadline:* Friday, March 9, 2018

### Grant Description

Campus dialogue grants will provide the opportunity for a campus or campus consortia to convene diverse constituencies for a series of gatherings with the goal of understanding, advancing, and realizing the greater purposes of higher education (engaged learning and discovery, well-being, civic engagement, and preparation for a meaningful life) within their unique campus contexts.

Successful proposals will provide a level of specificity and focus necessary to provoke sustained change on campus.

The dialogue designs and intended participants should reflect each institution's unique culture and attentiveness to current issues facing the campus. Examples may include discussions and planning related to the following:

- ❖ How students' civic action—such as participation in groups or in social and political campaigns—relates to their learning and well-being, and how such action can be supported through intentional institutional structures
- ❖ How curricular and pedagogical planning can help support the needs of an increasingly diverse student body, and why rethinking the university in an inclusive way that fully supports students' intersectional identities is needed not only to prepare students for the workforce, but for the full realization of a democratic society
- ❖ How students, faculty, staff, and community members can discuss and respond to oppositional perspectives reflecting political, social, and personal values
- ❖ How redesigning first-year advising or undergraduate mentoring programs can help foster positive change in campus culture and explicit attention to student well-being
- ❖ How campuses can respond to calls for safe and equitable spaces while maintaining a culture of freedom, liberal education, and risk-taking—and what sustaining this balance means for students' lives after graduation
- ❖ How academic and student affairs responsibilities and resources can be productively aligned to address both cognitive **and** non-cognitive outcomes for student learning and development

- ❖ How major investments in technology or uses of social media in instruction can be both disruptive and integrative forces in encouraging civic participation, and how technology and social media use relate to your campus mission

These are only examples, not prescriptions. We welcome and encourage your creative ideas and approaches.

## Dialogue Design

Successful applicants will provide details for meeting the following criteria:

- ❖ A set of at least (5) Dialogues, cohesive in thematic direction and distributed during the year-long project beginning in the Spring 2017 semester through the Fall 2017 semester (calendar year 2017-2018) in such a way as to provide consistent conversation among participants. Each dialogue should have an agenda and be linked with preceding and subsequent iterations. Early dialogues should be used to develop shared understanding of expected goals for conversations, understanding of issues and major questions to be addressed, and sharing of assumptions regarding campus culture and mission among participants. Latter dialogues should begin to focus on expected action steps and reporting on what was gained.
- ❖ A core group of diverse campus constituency participants should be involved. Perspectives from faculty, staff, and administrators (including someone with executive decision-making power) should be included. Students and community members should also be included when appropriate. Applicants are encouraged to maintain consistency in those participating in the dialogues, but it is also understood that different conversations may benefit from additional perspectives beyond the core group of participants.
- ❖ Guiding questions that may lead to determining the thematic cohesion of the campus dialogues (some examples below):
  - What is our (campus/institution's) unique take on the greater purposes of higher education (i.e. engaged learning, civic development, well-being, and preparation for a meaningful life) *or* what **should** the greater purposes be? Are some purposes more important than others? Are their connections apparent? Does their realization in our practices, policies, and priorities differ from what we say they are, or what we think they ought to be?
  - What is the main issue on campus we would like to address through these dialogues?
  - How does that issue relate to our ability to achieve the greater purposes of our institution and of higher education more broadly?
  - What action steps undertaken collectively and also within particular constituency groups would be required to enact change in:
    - The substance of conversations around board tables, seminar tables, and communal tables?
    - Expectations of stakeholders (particularly students)?
    - Institutional priorities or policies that would elevate attention to the wholeness and integration of greater purposes?
    - Practices (including assessment) or opportunities for documenting and making more visible how greater purposes are realized on campus?

# Submitting a Proposal

## Proposal Format

Campus Dialogue Grant proposals will be expected to include the following three components and should not exceed four pages in entirety:

1. Name and contact information of the primary contact person(s), also called “principal investigator” (PI), and the name of the dialogue facilitator(s). *Please note that the main principal investigator will be the primary point of contact for any email alerts regarding grant funding decisions.*
2. Proposal Narrative—organized to reflect the following categories:
  - Purpose of the dialogues—What issue or key question(s) on your campus are the dialogues intended to address?
  - Participants by campus area and rationale for their selection
  - An initial timeline for dialogues (reminder that the project should take place beginning in the Spring 2017 semester and completed by January 31, 2018)
  - Facilitation process and proposed initial guiding questions that reflect the context and culture of the institution
  - A logic model indicating goals and outcomes of the proposed dialogues, in addition to evidence indicators, associated activities, and relevant resources. (A template logic model is available as part of the Background Materials section on our [Funding Opportunities Page](#))
3. Budget. A brief budget narrative should include the amount requested and briefly describe the proposed expenditures. **Grants do require institutional matching**, which may include [in-kind matching](#) (non-cash contributions of time, equipment, space, and other items). Honoraria for the facilitator or others involved should not exceed \$1,000 each.

*\*BTtoP may consider grant proposals for up to \$15,000 for applications involving consortia of at least three institutions to offer inter-connected dialogues held over the course of the calendar year of 2017-2018. BTtoP defines consortia as organized collections of institutions, rather than a single college or university. Awards will be made to only one of the consortial institutions as principal investigator (PI); it will be the PI's responsibility to equitably distribute resources.*

## Proposal Submission Guidelines

**Proposals must be submitted by December 9, 2016.** Proposals should be submitted electronically as Word or PDF attachments emailed to [info@bttop.org](mailto:info@bttop.org), as well as in hard copy mailed to: Bringing Theory to Practice, 1818 R Street NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Awards will be announced via an email to the principal investigator by **January 20, 2017**.

## Who Can Apply

There is no limit on how many proposals can be submitted by one institution. Proposals can be submitted for dialogues held at individual campuses or to campus consortia. Institutions awarding baccalaureate degrees, community colleges, and equivalent non-US institutions are all eligible.

# Grant Assessment and Products

## Grant Reporting

For their formal grant reporting requirement, awarded grantees will be invited and expected to participate as authors on a campus dialogue grant WordPress site:

<https://bttopcampusdialoguegrants.wordpress.com/>.

Through the WordPress site, BTtoP hopes to encourage a forum for building a transparent and collaborative community of practice, as well as foster relationships among grantees. The site will be the medium through which principal investigators (PI's) will be required to post at least three brief, but structured, updates throughout the grant period, responding to prompted questions that will provoke qualitative reflection as well as quantitative data. While PI's will only be able to edit their own posts, all of the posts will be viewable to all of the PI's and BTtoP administrators. Beyond the required posts, PI's will also be encouraged to share ideas, questions, and comments through this online forum.

Our hope is that as opposed to a typical standard grant reporting form, the WordPress site will offer a more conversational and progressive medium where a variety of formats of resources (e.g. videos, links, images, text) can be openly and accessibly shared.

With the consent of the PI's, following the grant period, posts will also be provided as a resource to the broader BTtoP community.

## Budget Report

BTtoP will request a final formal budget report sent separately, **due by March 9, 2018**. Budgetary and financial information is confidential and will not be made public or posted on the WordPress site at any time.



## Additional Information

### Webinar

An informational webinar was offered on **Tuesday, October 25, 2016 at 2:30pm EST** by BTtoP's National Evaluator Ashley Finley to provide guidance on the RFP, BTtoP's Theory of Change, crafting campus dialogue proposals, and logic models. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions during the live presentation. A recording of the webinar and the PowerPoint slides are now both available and posted on the Funding Opportunities page: <http://www.bttop.org/grants-funding/funding-opportunities>.

### RFP

This RFP can be accessed through the funding opportunities section of the BTtoP website: <http://www.bttop.org/grants-funding/funding-opportunities>.

### Background Materials

RFP background materials are available on funding opportunities webpage listed above, and we encourage your consideration of them as you draft a proposal. Among the materials are logic model templates, BTtoP publications, excerpts from case studies, and former grant reports from relevant BTtoP supported projects.

### FAQs

For answers to frequently asked questions regarding grants, please consult the BTtoP Grant FAQ page: <http://www.bttop.org/faq-page>.

### Contact Us

If after reviewing the resources above, you cannot find the information you are looking for, please feel free to email [info@bttop.org](mailto:info@bttop.org) with questions. You can also [sign up for our mailing list](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.